

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-19 are pending. Claim 16 has been amended. The Specification has been amended. No new matter is added.

The amendment to claim 16 and to the Specification changes the word "higher" to "lower." Applicants are making these amendments to correct an error of clerical nature. In particular, the Specification discloses, at page 7, lines 6-11 (with reference to Fig. 2):

Conversion of the nitride semiconductor epitaxial layer 120 into a metal layer is performed by releasing nitrogen from the nitride semiconductor epitaxial layer 120 using a difference in the equilibrium vapor pressure of nitrogen within the nitride semiconductor epitaxial layer 120 and the nitride semiconductor epitaxial layers 110 and 130.

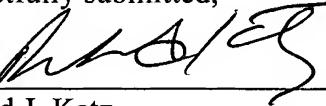
The epitaxial layer 110 is formed first, then the second layer 120 is formed, followed by layer 130. *See*, Specification, page 6, line 11 through page 7, line 3. A person of ordinary skill in the art reading the above quoted passage would understand that for nitrogen to be released from the second layer 120, it is necessary that second layer to have an equilibrium vapor pressure of nitrogen lower than the first layer 110. Therefore, a person of ordinary skill in the art would understand that the above amendments do not add new matter.

Entry of the above amendment is respectfully requested prior to the examination of this application.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Dated: March 24, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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